

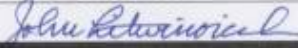
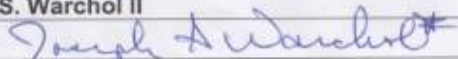


El Dorado County Child Welfare

System Improvement Plan

May 2006

SIP Signature Sheet

California's Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan	
County:	El Dorado
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	Department of Human Services
Period of Plan:	May 2006 – April 2009
Period of Outcomes Data:	California Child Welfare Services, Outcome & Accountability County Data Report (Child Welfare Supervised Caseload) El Dorado October 2005
Date Submitted:	May 5, 2006
County Contact Person for County System Improvement Plan	
Name:	Christine Amey
Title:	Children's Protective Services, Program Manager
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Submitted by each agency for the children under its care	
Submitted by:	County Child Welfare Agency Director (Lead Agency)
Name:	John Litwinovich
Signature:	
Submitted by:	
	County Chief Probation Officer
Name:	Joseph S. Warchol II
Signature:	

**EL DORADO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL
Meeting of April 25, 2006**

AGENDA TITLE: 2006 El Dorado County Child Welfare System Improvement Plan	
DEPARTMENT: Human Services	DEPT SIGNOFF:
CONTACT: John Litwinovich	<i>John Litwinovich</i>
DATE: 4/11/2006 PHONE: 642-7275	CAO USE ONLY: 4/12 <i>C. Laura Schwartz</i>
DEPARTMENT SUMMARY AND REQUESTED BOARD ACTION: Human Services – Social Services Division recommends that the Board review and approve the 2006 El Dorado County Child Welfare System Improvement Plan for submission to the California Department of Social Services. The proposed strategies in the System Improvement Plan are designed to improve outcomes for children in El Dorado County. <i>The plan is based on a self-assessment update and peer quality case review. Areas for improvement include lowering the rate of recurrence of maltreatment of children not removed from homes by 1%; increasing the 10-day response to child abuse referrals from 81% to 90%; decrease the rate of CAO RECOMMENDATIONS: reentry into foster care by 1%; and continue to refer minors to local resources.</i> <i>Recommend approval. Laura J. Hill 4/17/06</i>	
Financial impact? () Yes (X) No	Funding Source: () Gen Fund (X) Other
BUDGET SUMMARY:	Other:
Total Est. Cost \$0.00	CAO Office Use Only:
Funding	4/5's Vote Required () Yes (X) No
Budgeted	Change in Policy () Yes (X) No
New Funding	New Personnel () Yes (X) No
Savings	CONCURRENCES:
Other	Risk Management
Total Funding	County Counsel
Change in Net County Cost \$0.00	Other
*Explain	
BOARD ACTIONS: ALL 2006	
APPROVED	
Vote: Unanimous _____ Or _____ Ayes: DUPRAY, PAINE, BAUMANN, SWEENEY, SANTIAGO Noes: NONE Abstentions: NONE Absent: NONE <small>Rev. 04/05</small>	I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered into the minutes of the Board of Supervisors Date: _____ Attest: Cindy Keck, Board of Supervisors Clerk By: _____

***El Dorado County
Department of Human Services
System Improvement Plan May 2006***

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Introduction

Pursuant to State Law, Assembly Bill 636, effective January 2004, a new Child Welfare Services Outcome and Accountability System began operation in California. The new system, referred to as the California-Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR), was developed in accordance with the provisions of Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) 10601.2 and focuses primarily on measuring outcomes in Safety, Permanence and Child and Family Well-Being. Key components of the new accountability system include:

- **Quarterly County Data Reports**
Individual county performance on 14 data indicators is used to measure progress. The data is provided to each county welfare agency and published online.
- **County Self-Assessments**
In collaboration with community partners and stakeholders, each county identifies its strengths and challenges. Reassessments occur in three-year cycles.
- **Peer Quality Case Reviews**
Each county welfare agency forms teams composed of its own social workers, staff from other counties and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) staff to review randomly selected cases in at least one of its identified improvement areas. Teams conduct structured interviews to evaluate the cases.
- **System Improvement Plan**
Based on its self-assessment, each county welfare agency collaborates with local partners to develop a plan that specifies priorities, improvement goals and action steps. The County Board of Supervisors must approve the plan.

El Dorado County's Self Assessment of 2004 identified areas for improvement in the Child Welfare System. Strategies to address those areas and improve outcomes were incorporated into the County's System Improvement Plan of 2004. The Peer Quality Case Review of 2005 aided in generating qualitative case data to help the County clarify needed improvement strategies. The results of the Peer Quality Case Review and the Self Assessment update of 2006 have been incorporated into the El Dorado County 2006 System Improvement Plan, developed by the El Dorado County Departments of Human Services and Probation, in collaboration with local community partners.

I. Local Planning Bodies

Core representatives in the development of the System Improvement Plan included members from Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Probation, Foster Parent Association, Child Abuse Prevention Council (Parent Partner), Department of Human Services (DHS) Line, Supervisory, Management and Administrative staff, from both the Placerville and South Lake Tahoe offices, and County Adoptions staff. Other stakeholders consulted were Public Health, Mental Health and Alcohol and Drug, Law Enforcement, Labor, Juvenile Court Bench Officers, El Dorado County Office of Education, Local Tribe and the Regional Training Academy.

Participants in the System Improvement Plan are listed below.

Name	Agency
Bonnie McLane	<i>El Dorado County Foster Parent Association, President</i>
Karla Kowalski	<i>El Dorado County Probation Department, Supervising Deputy Probation Officer</i>
Lorrie Evers	<i>El Dorado County Child Abuse Prevention Council, Treasurer, Parent Partner</i>
Christine Amey	<i>El Dorado County Department of Human Services, Children's Protective Services, Program Manager</i>
Patty Moley	<i>El Dorado County, Department of Human Services, Children's Protective Services, Program Manager</i>
Moirhian Martin	<i>El Dorado County Department of Human Services, Children's Protective Services, Social Services Supervisor</i>
Suzanne Ballen	<i>El Dorado County Department of Human Services, Children's Protective Services, Adoptions Supervisor</i>
Diane Angella	<i>El Dorado County Department of Human Services, Children's Protective Services, Social Worker</i>
Cathie Watson	<i>El Dorado County Court Appointed Special Advocates, Program Manager</i>
Janet Walker-Conroy	<i>El Dorado County Department of Human Services, Assistant Director</i>
Mark Contois	<i>El Dorado County Department of Human Services, Children's Protective Services, Program Manager</i>
Elizabeth Blakemore	<i>El Dorado County Child Abuse Prevention Council, Chair</i>
Nichole Loftis	<i>South Lake Tahoe Women's Center, Director</i>
Darryl Keck	<i>El Dorado County Department Of Mental Health, Children's Services, Program Manager</i>
Jeff Neves	<i>El Dorado County Sheriff's Department, Sheriff</i>
Jere Copeland	<i>El Dorado County Employee's Association, Executive Director</i>
Michelle Witt	<i>Open Line Foster Family Agency, Regional Director</i>

El Dorado County's original Self Assessment in 2004 was a countywide collaborative effort that included representatives from Probation, Mental Health, Public Health, Education, community service providers, CASA, the County Board of Supervisors support staff, foster parents, law enforcement, and First 5 El Dorado, as well as DHS. The County's original System Improvement Plan of 2004 was developed by a core group of community partners including the Lake Tahoe Collaborative, community service providers, Mental Health, Probation and community representatives and DHS. In El Dorado County's Self Assessment update, 2006, the core collaborators were Probation, community service providers, CASA and DHS.

II. Findings that Support Qualitative Change

El Dorado County's planning bodies used both quantitative and qualitative data in the Self Assessment and System Improvement Plan.

Quantitative data used in El Dorado County's initial Self Assessment and System Improvement Plan of 2004, Self Assessment Update of 2006, and the 2006 System Improvement Plan assisted the County in identifying key areas for improvement. Data was obtained from:

- **The Quarterly Outcome & Accountability County Data Report**
The data in this report focuses on critical safety, stability, family, and well-being measures that are currently available, and are provided to counties for ongoing assessment of their programs' performance.
- **Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS)**
Provides ongoing information on trends in safety and breakdowns of referrals by such factors as area, ethnicity, age, and language.
- **U.S. Census Bureau**
Provides a demographic profile of the general population of El Dorado County.
- **California Employment Development Department**
Provides information about El Dorado County's unemployment rate.

Qualitative data was obtained from the Peer Quality Case Review. The Peer Quality Case Review focus was Re-entry. The Peer Quality Case Review findings helped to clarify strategies needed to assist in improving outcomes by identifying key factors leading to successful reunification as well as barriers.

All safety outcomes identified as areas needing improvement in the County Self Assessment are addressed in the System Improvement Plan. Although some other areas identified in the Self Assessment and Peer Quality Case Review are not addressed in the strategies of the System Improvement Plan, the County continues to strive to break down barriers to service delivery. These areas include:

- **Housing** – El Dorado County is in the process of developing a plan for a continuum of care strategy. The County anticipates seeking approval from the County Board of Supervisors by late fall of 2006, and submitting the continuum of care strategy plan to the State by the end of 2006. Once

approved, the plan will open the door to additional funding opportunities to further serve the homeless and low income families of El Dorado County.

- **Contracted Services** – In order to be compliant with the County's Purchasing Ordinance and to be fiscally accountable, DHS initiated the process of contracting with all service providers. This process was completed at the end of fiscal year 2004/2005 with existing service providers and is ongoing with new service providers.
- **Bilingual Services** – Subsequent to the Peer Quality Case Review in 2005, bilingual staff have been added to DHS Children's Protective Services and Eligibility units and to several service agencies in the South Lake Tahoe area including the Women's Center, Family Resource Center, Tahoe Youth and Family Services, Mental Health and the Sierra Recovery Center.

III. Summary Assessment of the Self Assessment Update, January 2006

A. Discussion of System Strengths and Areas Needing Improvement

1. Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.

In response to the needs of the community, the Department modified existing program policies and created new policies and procedures. The implementation of new policies and procedures had a direct effect on the existing social work practice in the Children's Protective Services program. The department also implemented SDM and DR protocols. All of these factors contributed to the increase in investigated referrals.

2. Children are maintained safely in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

First and foremost, the children in El Dorado County are maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate. The rate at which there is a recurrence of maltreatment after the first substantiated allegation of abuse in El Dorado County is lower than the state rate.

It is anticipated that 2005 data, when available, will reflect a decrease in the recurrence of maltreatment, due to the consistent use of the SDM tool, the institution of the Children's Assessment Team and the implementation of Phase II of DR.

As a result of the 2004 merger of the Department of Social Services and the Department of Community Services, increased supervision, the implementation of SDM and changes in agency policy, there was a significant increase in investigated referrals to the Child Protective Services Intake Unit.

Presently, Children's Protective Services is staffed to its allocation, has identified targeted areas of focus to include training, and made strategic changes in the quality assurance reviews. DHS remains hopeful that the compliance rate will continue to increase as a direct result of the changes that have been implemented.

3. Children have permanency and stability in their living situations without increasing reentry to foster care.

El Dorado County continues to seek permanency for foster care children. El Dorado County has implemented several case management practices over the last two years, including implementing SDM and concurrent planning staffing with the adoption supervisor, which contribute to children being placed in a permanent living situation.

Data reflects that El Dorado County remains above the state average in the length of time children are in foster care prior to reunification or adoption. With the continued use of SDM, and the institution of the Children's Assessment Team and MDT, it is anticipated that the percentage of children reunifying within 12 months will increase.

El Dorado County continues to work on barriers that present challenges to permanency, including continued recruitment of foster homes, particularly in the South Lake Tahoe area. The County also continues to work on after care plans with community partners on the challenge of providing post-placement services to support families once children have been returned home.

4. The family relationships and connections of the children served by the CWS will be preserved, as appropriate.

Although there has been a decrease in the number of foster homes, El Dorado County has been able to increase the placement of sibling groups in the same foster homes.

When siblings cannot be placed together, the county supports family relationships and connections by encouraging sibling visits.

El Dorado County continues to focus on foster family recruitment and retention, particularly for the South Lake Tahoe region. This will enable children to be placed closer to their families, as well as with their siblings.

8. Youth emancipating from foster care are prepared to transition to adulthood.

El Dorado County has an active Independent Living Program (ILP). The ILP program collaborates with various local programs to assist youth in achieving further education and/or employment. The next goal for the County's ILP program is for youth to become directly involved with and connected to the OneStop¹ system.

The development of personal, supportive relationships is fostered by having the youth work with his/her parent, social worker, and ILP worker to establish an appropriate case plan.

DHS has implemented emancipation conferences for ILP youth to assure a smooth transition to adulthood.

Transitional housing assistance is provided to youth, via the Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP), and DHS is in the process of planning to implement the THP-Plus program to provide the same assistance to youth ages 18-24.

El Dorado County's CASA organization has become very active in assisting the ILP youth of the county.

IV. SIP Plan Components

Outcome/Systemic Factor:

2A: (State) Recurrence of abuse/neglect in homes where children were not removed. Percent of all the children with an allegation (inconclusive or substantiated) who were not removed and who had a subsequent substantiated allegation within 12 months.

County's Current Performance:

Dates	Outcome Measure	Fed or State	El Dorado County Performance October 2005 ²	PIP Target ³ /Proposed State Performance Target
04/01/03-03/31/04	2A	State	9.1%	7.70%

Improvement Goal 1.0

Lower the rate of recurrence of maltreatment where children were not removed by 1%, to 8.1%, or less.

Strategy 1. 1

A Multi-Level Review Team will assess all referrals that have been identified as having recurring patterns of high-risk behaviors that continue to place the child(ren) at risk.

Strategy Rationale

A Multi-Level Review Team, consisting of professionals with specific levels of expertise, will assist the social worker in the determination, based on the identified risk level of the family, of the most appropriate services to treat the recurring patterns of high-risk behaviors, which is expected to decrease the rate of recurrence of maltreatment.

Milestone	1.1.1 The Steps of Investigation Guideline will be revised to include the new Multi-Level Review process.	Timeframe	June 30, 2006	Assigned to	Program Manager and Analyst
	1.1.2 Social workers will be trained on the revised Steps of Investigation Guideline and how to identify recurring high-risk patterns of behavior.		July 31, 2006		Program Manager and Supervisors
	1.1.3 When documenting in CWS/CMS on the initial face to face contact with the family, the social worker will include the identified recurring high risk behaviors that are placing the child at risk, and notify the supervisor. The supervisor will schedule the referral for review for the next Multi-Level Review Team meeting.		July 31, 2006, and ongoing		Social Workers
	1.1.4 Supervisors will ensure compliance of 1.1.3 during scheduled case staffing.		July 31, 2006, and ongoing		Supervisors
	1.1.5 Develop quality assurance program to track compliance.		August 31, 2006		QA Manager, Analyst
	1.1.6 Implement quality assurance program.		September 30, 2006		QA Manager, Analyst, Supervisors
Strategy 1. 2 Social workers will continue to complete the Structured Decision Making (SDM) Safety Assessment and Risk Assessment tools that include the most recent changes on existing tools and the new Hot Line Tool. Social workers will complete a new Safety Assessment if circumstances change during an initial investigation.		Strategy Rationale The Safety and Risk Assessment SDM tools are used to determine safety and risk factors in a referral, and are used subsequently if circumstances change during the initial investigation.			

Milestone	1.2.1 Supervisors will ensure that all SDM tools have been completed during scheduled case staffing.	Timeframe	July 31, 2006	Assigned to	Supervisors
Strategy 1.3 Social workers will write Investigative Narratives and Detention reports that factually support the allegations in the Petition.		Strategy Rationale More effectively documenting investigations will increase the number of petitions sustained in court.			
Milestone	1.3.1 Social workers will demonstrate in their documentation all the evidence supporting the pertinent information gathered in the investigation that address and identify the risk issues to each child in the family system.	Timeframe	August 31, 2006	Assigned to	Social Workers
	1.3.2 Court Report and Petition Writing Guidelines will be reviewed and revised.		June 30, 2006		Program Manager and Analyst
	1.3.3 Social workers will be re-trained on Court Report and Petition Writing Guidelines.		July 30, 2006		Program Manager and Supervisors
	1.3.4 Supervisors will ensure, during their review of Petitions and Detention reports, compliance with 1.3.1.		August 31, 2006, and ongoing		Supervisors
	1.1.5 Develop quality assurance program to track compliance.		August 31, 2006		QA Manager, Analyst
	1.1.6 Implement quality assurance program.		September 30, 2006		QA Manager, Analyst, Supervisors

Strategy 1. 4 When it is determined during the Multi-Level Review process that there are no immediate safety issues and the risk of ongoing abuse is low to moderate, and the family is willing to engage in services, the family will be referred through Differential Response (DR) Path II for services in the community.		Strategy Rationale Providing community based early intervention services to families identified as being at low to moderate risk for abuse, and willing to engage in services, is expected to decrease the rate of maltreatment.			
Milestone	1.4.1. Social workers will assure that families willing to engage in services have been referred to and are participating in services through DR Path II, before the referral is closed. If families initially willing to participate in services have not followed through, social workers will bring the referral back to the Multi-Level Review Team where the family be re-assessed for current risk to the child(ren) that may require Voluntary Family Maintenance (VFM) services or the filing of a detention petition.	Timeframe	July 31, 2006	Assigned to	Social Workers
	1.4.2 Supervisors will ensure compliance with 1.4.1.		August 31, 2006		Supervisors
	1.4.3 Develop quality assurance system to track compliance.		August 31, 2006		Program Manager and Analyst
	1.4.4 Implement quality assurance program.		September 30, 2006		Program Manager, Analyst, Supervisors
Strategy 1. 5 When the Multi-Level Review Team determines that VFM services are necessary, the family will be included in the following Multi-Level Review Team meeting to determine the most appropriate services, identify any barriers to services, and develop the case plan, to include services that will treat the entire family. The family will return for re-assessment with the Multi-Level Review Team within three months of the initial case plan and quarterly thereafter.		Strategy Rationale Engaging the family will assure that the family strengths and needs are incorporated into the determination of the most appropriate case plan objectives and services. Providing treatment to the family as a whole, in addition to any identified individual services, and re-assessing case plan progress quarterly is expected to result in a reduction in the recurrence of maltreatment.			

Milestone	1.5.1 Social workers will assure that VFM families attend the Multi-Level Review Team meeting and participate in the development of the case plan.	Timeframe	July 31, 2006	Assigned to	Social Workers
	1.5.2 Social workers will assure that VFM families return to the Multi-Level Review Team meeting within three months following the initial assessment and quarterly thereafter for progress update and re-assessment. Social workers will complete a new SDM Family Strengths and Needs Assessment and gather all progress reports from service providers to present the case. Social workers will notify the supervisor who will schedule the quarterly plan re-assessment for review for the next Multi-Level Review Team meeting.		July 31, 2006, and ongoing		Social workers
	1.5.3 Supervisors will ensure compliance with 1.5.2.		August 31, 2006, and ongoing		Supervisors
	1.5.4 Develop quality assurance system to track compliance.		August 31, 2006		Program Manager and Analyst
	1.5.5 Implement quality assurance program.		September 30, 2006		Program Manager, Analyst, Supervisors

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

El Dorado County has recently implemented a Multi-Level Review process. The process will be expanded to include the assessment of referrals with previous history as well as detentions, quarterly re-assessments of all cases, and after care plans. Thorough assessments and re-assessments are expected to result in reducing both recurrence and re-entry rates.

As identified in the Peer Quality Case Review of 2005, El Dorado County will continue to assure that SDM tools are consistently used, which is also expected to contribute to a reduction in the rate of recurrence of maltreatment and re-entry into the foster care system.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

Core⁴ training and training for ongoing social workers should include enhanced comprehensive training on the investigation process, forensic evidence gathering, incorporating SDM results into the assessment of the referral and exploration of family history. Core training should at least be offered quarterly in each major area of the Northern Region to assure that all staff required to attend are able to do so and still allow sufficient office coverage. It would be especially helpful if Core and other mandated training could be offered in locations closer to the smaller counties that are distant from the major cities where classes are currently offered. This would assure attendance and minimize the high cost of travel for the smaller, more distant counties.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

Collaboration with other agencies was identified in El Dorado County's PQCR in 2005 as a promising practice. Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT) in Placerville and South Lake Tahoe have been recently implemented to discuss cases across disciplines. MDT coordination and administration have been financed by Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funds, as outlined in El Dorado County's Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT), Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP), and Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Three Year Plan 2005-2008.

The Placerville office is in the process of forming an executive level collaborative consisting of major community stakeholders. This forum will provide an opportunity to discuss and strategize solutions to fiscal and programmatic issues and discuss global concerns of agencies and the community regarding high risk children and families. Items for discussion could include the implementation and financing of programs such as Differential Response, more effective service delivery such as use of evidence based practices, identification of service gaps in the community, maximizing opportunities to blend funds, joint-participation in programs and service deliveries, and non-duplication of services.

The Lake Tahoe Collaborative continues to be an effective organization in South Lake Tahoe where information is shared regarding services and resources on the Eastern Slope of El Dorado County.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

None

Outcome/Systemic Factor:

2B: Percent of child abuse referrals with a timely response – 10 day.

2C: Of all children who required a monthly social worker visit, how many received a monthly visit?

County's Current Performance:

Dates	Outcome Measure	Fed or State	El Dorado County Performance October 2005	PIP Target/Proposed State Performance Target
Q1 2005	2B -10 day	State	80.8%	90%
Q1 2005	2C	State	90.3%	90%

Improvement Goal 1.0

2B (10 day): Increase 10 day response compliance to 90% or higher.

2C: Continue to monitor monthly social worker visits to assure ongoing 90% or higher compliance rate.

Strategy 1.1

Training will be provided to social workers to ensure increased compliance. Any identified ongoing personnel issues related to untimely responses or visits will be addressed.

Strategy Rationale

Providing group and individual support and training will help to assure that specific time management and prioritization techniques are identified, learned and utilized. In addition, addressing any related personnel issues will assist in identifying any further or individual training issues.

Milestone	1.1.1 Unit and individual training will be provided to social workers on case and time management in order to meet deadlines.	Timeframe	July 31, 2006 and ongoing	Assigned to	Supervisors and Program Manager
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	1.1.2 Unit and individual training will be provided on CWS/CMS to ensure staff are accurately entering data within required time frames, to include all approved face to face contact waivers.		July 31, 2006 and ongoing		Technical Support Staff, Supervisors
Strategy 1.2 Supervisors will monitor to assure timely response, monthly visits and data entry.		Strategy Rationale Consistent monitoring using Safe Measures and On-going Case Deadlines Business Objects reports is expected to increase compliance.			
Milestone	1.2.1. Supervisors will review data on 10 day referral response and monthly social worker face to face visits using Safe Measures and On-Going Case Deadlines Business Objects reports.	Timeframe	Weekly, ongoing, by July 31, 2006	Assigned to	Supervisors
	1.2.2 Supervisors will assure, through weekly staff meetings with workers, that all timelines have been met.		Weekly, ongoing, by July 31, 2006		Supervisors
Strategy 1.3 Quality assurance will be conducted to track compliance.		Strategy Rationale An ongoing quality assurance program will capture data on error trends so that systems for improvement can be put in place to ensure compliance with deadlines.			
Milestone	1.3.1 Develop quality assurance program to track compliance	Timeframe	August 31, 2006	Assigned to	Program Manager and Analyst
	1.3.2 Implement quality assurance program.		September 30, 2006		Program Manager, Analyst, Supervisors
Strategy 1.4 When data indicates that referral time lines are approaching non-compliance a staff support data entry program will be implemented.		Strategy Rationale Will assist social workers in timely referral response and monthly visits.			

Milestone	1.4.1 Develop a dictation data entry system process and guideline for clerical assistance with data input on CWS/CMS face to face contacts. The process will include mandatory review by social workers off all data entered into CWS/CMS by clerical staff.	Timeframe	May 31, 2006	Assigned to	Program Managers
	1.4.2 Train staff and implement the system when referral time lines are approaching non-compliance.		June 30, 2006		Program Managers and Supervisor.
<u>Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.</u>					
None					
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.					
All new staff will be fully trained on CWS/CMS and on-site training will be conducted on an ongoing basis for both district offices of the county, as necessary. Core training should be offered quarterly in each major area of the Northern Region to assure that all staff that need to attend are able to do so and still allow sufficient coverage at the office. It would be especially helpful if Core and other mandated training could be offered in locations closer to the smaller counties that are distant from the major cities where classes are currently offered. This would assure attendance and minimize the high cost of travel for the smaller, more distant counties.					
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.					
This is an internal improvement goal.					
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.					
State recognition of increased workload of social workers and the need for increased staffing allocations. Also, when social workers participate in mandatory training, it creates a staffing shortage resulting in minimal caseload coverage.					

Outcome/Systemic Factor:

3B: Percent with 1-2 placements within 12 months. For all children in child welfare supervised foster care for less than 12 months during the most recent 12 month study period, what percent had no more than 2 placements?

County's Current Performance:

Dates	Outcome Measure	Fed or State	El Dorado County Performance October 2005	PIP Target/Proposed State Performance Target
04/01/04-03/31/05	3B	Fed	79.1%	81.6%

Improvement Goal 1.0

Increase the percentage of children with no more than two placements by 1%, to 80.1%, or more.

Strategy 1. 1

Continue foster home recruitment and retention efforts, placing greater focus on recruitment in the South Lake Tahoe area, and provide ongoing support, training and assistance to foster homes. Recruit fos-adopt homes.

Strategy Rationale

Continued recruitment efforts and ongoing assistance and support of our foster and fos-adopt homes will assure that children continue to be placed in the lowest level of care as required by AB 636. Increasing the number of family foster homes in the South Lake Tahoe area will reduce Foster Family Agency placements, freeing up funds for expanded training, support and recruitment efforts. A decrease in the number of placements per child is anticipated.

Milestone	1.1.1 The County will continue to participate in community activities to advertise the need for foster homes and fos-adopt homes, focusing on recruitment in the South Lake Tahoe area.	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	Licensing Social Worker, Supervisor and Program Manager
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	1.1.2 Expand the number of existing foster homes and identify possible fos-adopt homes, focusing on recruitment in the South Lake Tahoe area.		Ongoing		Licensing Social Worker, Supervisor and Program Manager
	1.1.3 Continue to meet monthly with foster and fos-adopt families to facilitate communication, provide ongoing training and address foster parent needs. Training will include specific topics as requested by foster parents such as coping with teenagers, understanding the special needs of foster children and assisting in the reunification process.		Ongoing		Licensing Social Worker, Supervisor and Program Manager.
Strategy 1. 2 Increase efforts to minimize live scan errors.			Strategy Rationale Expediting the live scan process will allow the County to place children with relatives earlier, thereby minimizing the number of placements.		
Milestone	1.2.1. Work with local law enforcement to reduce the error rate of entries into the California Department of Justice (DOJ) system on live scan clearances that are not being processed for sub-arrest information.	Timeframe	June 30, 2006 and ongoing	Assigned to	Licensing Social Worker, Supervisor and Program Manager.
Strategy 1. 3 Cross train additional social workers in the Placerville and South Lake Tahoe district offices to assist in the Relative Approval process.			Strategy Rationale Training additional social workers in the Relative Approval process will allow the County to place children with relatives earlier, thereby minimizing the number of placements.		

Milestone	1.3.1 Implement the Relative Approval cross training process.	Timeframe	September 30, 2006 and ongoing	Assigned to	Licensing Social Worker, Supervisor
<p><u>Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.</u></p> <p>El Dorado County recently set aside funds for respite care for county foster families. Providing funds for respite care is expected to assist in the effort to retain county foster homes.</p>					
<p><u>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</u></p> <p>Licensing and Relative approval training should be offered more frequently and in each major area of the Northern Region to assure that all staff that need to attend are able to do so and still allow sufficient coverage at the office.</p> <p>The County will provide specialized training on specific topics as requested by foster parents such as coping with teenagers, understanding the special needs of foster children and assisting in the reunification process.</p>					
<p><u>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</u></p> <p>The county needs the cooperation of law enforcement in order to reduce the rate of live scan errors. Other partners such as CASA and community-based organization family advocates can assist by helping prospective relative caretakers in the Relative Approval process.</p>					
<p><u>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.</u></p> <p>Expedite the Relative Approval process so that children can be placed with relatives in a timely manner consistent with State guidelines. Increase the State allocation for licensing workers.</p> <p>State recognition of increased workload of social workers and the need for increased staffing allocations. Also, when social workers participate in mandatory training, it creates a staffing shortage resulting in minimal caseload coverage.</p>					

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Re-Entry. Re-Entry was the focus of El Dorado County's PQCR 2005.

3F: For all children who entered child welfare supervised foster care during the 12-month study period, what percent were subsequent entries within 12 months of a prior exit?

3G: For all children who entered child welfare supervised foster care for the first time, and were reunified within 12 months of entry, what percent re-entered foster care within 12 months of reunification?

County's Current Performance:

Dates	Outcome Measure	Fed or State	EDC Performance October 2005	PIP Target / Proposed State Performance Target
04/01/04-03/31/05	3F	Fed	16.0%	9.4%
04/01/02-03/31/03	3G	State	19.4%	11.6%

Improvement Goal 1.0

3F: Decrease the rate of re-entry by 1%, to 15.0%, or less.

3G: Decrease the rate of re-entry by 1%, to 18.4%, or less.

Strategy 1.1

All cases where children have been detained will be assessed through a Multi-Level Review process.

Strategy Rationale

Multi-Level Review by professionals with specific expertise will determine the most appropriate treatment services for the family, based on the identified risk level. The review process is expected to decrease the rate of re-entry.

Milestone	1.1.1 When children have been detained the social worker will notify the supervisor who will schedule the referral for review for the next Multi-Level Review Team meeting.	Timeframe	July 31, 2006	Assigned to	Program Manager and Supervisors
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	1.1.2 The current Steps of Investigation Guideline and the Investigative Narrative will be revised to include the Multi-Level Review referral process, and social workers will be trained on the new process.		July 31, 2006		Program Manager, Analyst and Supervisors
	1.1.3 Supervisors will assure compliance and provide ongoing training.		August 31, 2006		Supervisors
	1.1.4 Develop quality assurance program to track compliance.		August 31, 2006		Program Manager and Analyst
	1.1.5 Implement quality assurance program.		September 30, 2006		Program Manager, Analyst, Supervisors
Strategy 1. 2 If the Multi-Level Review Team determines that there is clear and convincing evidence that the circumstances of the referral fall within those qualifying under W&I 361.5 (b) and it appears that the family will not benefit from services, reunification will not be recommended and concurrent planning for permanency will begin.		Strategy Rationale Identifying families that fall under W&I 361.5 (b), wherein the family is not likely to benefit from reunification services, will decrease the rate of re-entry.			
Milestone	1.2.1. If during the Multi-Level review process, it is determined that reunification services will not be offered, the department will use legal resources to deny reunification services and begin the concurrent permanency planning process.	Timeframe	August 31, 2006	Assigned to	Social Workers, Supervisors, Program Managers
	1.2.2 Guidelines will be written for this process.		July 31, 2006		Program Manager and Analyst
	1.2.3 All social workers will be fully trained on the W&I 361.5 (b) court process.		August 31, 2006		Program Manager, Supervisors

	1.2.3 Supervisors will assure compliance and provide ongoing training.		August 31, 2006		Supervisors
	1.2.4 Develop quality assurance program to track compliance.		August 31, 2006		Program Manager and Analyst
	1.2.5 Implement quality assurance program.		September 30, 2006		Program Manager, Analyst, Supervisors
Strategy 1.3 When the Multi-Level Review Team determines that Family Reunification services are appropriate, family members will be included in the Multi-Level Review case planning meeting to determine the most appropriate services and develop a case plan to include services that will treat the entire family. Concurrent permanency planning will be included in the assessment. The family will return for re-assessment by a Multi-Level Review Team within three months of the initial case plan (and quarterly thereafter) to review case plan progress, including concurrent and permanency planning needs.		Strategy Rationale Engaging the family will ensure that family strengths and needs are incorporated into the determination of the most appropriate case plan objectives and services. Providing treatment to the family as a whole, in addition to identified individual services, is expected to result in a reduction in the recurrence of maltreatment. Concurrent planning will assure timelines of permanency.			
Milestone	1.3.1 Social workers will ensure, or document their efforts to ensure, that families participate in the Multi-Level Review Team case planning meeting and in the development of the case plan.	Timeframe	July 31, 2006	Assigned to	Social Workers
	1.3.2 Social workers will ensure, or document their efforts to ensure, that families return to a Multi-Level Review process meeting within three months following the initial assessment (as well as quarterly thereafter) for progress update and re-assessment. Social workers will complete a new SDM Family Strengths and Needs Assessment and gather progress reports from all service providers and CASA to present the case. Social workers will notify the supervisor who will schedule the next quarterly Multi-Level Review Team meeting.		July 31, 2006		Program Manager, Analyst and Supervisors

1.3.3 Supervisors will ensure compliance and provide ongoing training.		August 31, 2006		Supervisors
		August 31, 2006		Program Manager and Analyst
		September 30, 2006		Program Manager, Analyst, Supervisors
1.3.4 Develop quality assurance system to ensure compliance.				
1.3.5 Implement quality assurance program.				
Strategy 1.4 During the Multi-Level Review quarterly case plan re-assessment, if case plan progress has been substantial and reunification is probable, the Multi-Level Review Team, along with the family and the social worker, will discuss and begin to develop a plan (aftercare plan) for continued care and support after the children have been returned to the custody of the parents, in preparation for the next status review hearing. The family will be asked to provide information on possible internal or extended family support systems, or successful mentor families with similar issues, to be incorporated into and assist with the delivery of the aftercare plan, which will be either: A Court Ordered Family Maintenance Plan; extensive Wraparound services; VFM plan or services provided by community partners through DR Path II. At the last quarterly Multi-Level Review Team meeting prior to the dismissal hearing, the aftercare plan will be incorporated in the court report in support of the recommendation to return the children to the home.		Strategy Rationale Re-assessment will allow the Multi-Level Review Team, with its multi-disciplinary expertise, to work with the family and the social worker in order to develop an aftercare plan that will continue to provide the family with support during the vulnerable transition period. Assuring maximum aftercare support is expected to result in a decrease in the rate of re-entry.		

Milestone	1.4.1 Guidelines will be developed and staff will be trained on the process.	Timeframe	July 31, 2006	Assigned to	Program Manager, Supervisors, Analyst
	1.4.2 Supervisors will assure compliance and provide ongoing training.		August 31, 2006		Supervisors
	1.4.4 Develop quality assurance system to ensure compliance.		August 31, 2006		Program Manager and Analyst
	1.4.5 Implement quality assurance program.		September 30, 2006		Program Manager, Analyst, Supervisors
Strategy 1.5 Social workers will write Court Reports that effectively reflect case plan objectives and progress and support any recommendation to the court.		Strategy Rationale Court reports that effectively reflect case plan progress will support the recommendation to the court to either continue services or return the child(ren) to the home. In addition, it will reduce the number hearings that are continued due to a lack of supporting documentation and the child(ren) will be returned home timely.			
Mile-stone	1.5.1 Social workers will demonstrate in their documentation in Court Reports, clear supporting evidence that reflects case plan progress.	Timeframe	July 31, 2006	Assigned to	Social Workers
	1.5.2 Court Report Writing Guidelines will be reviewed and revised.		May 31, 2006		Program Manager and Analyst

1.5.3 Social workers will be re-trained on Court Report Writing Guidelines.	June 30, 2006	Program Manager and Supervisors
1.5.4 Supervisors will ensure, during their review of Court Reports, compliance with 1.5.1.	July 31, 2006, and ongoing	Supervisors
1.5.5 Develop quality assurance program to track compliance.	August 31, 2006	QA Manager, Analyst
1.5.6 Implement quality assurance program.	September 30, 2006	QA Manager, Analyst, Supervisors

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

El Dorado County has recently implemented a Multi-Level Review process. The process will be expanded to include the assessment of referrals with previous history as well as detentions, quarterly re-assessments of all cases, and aftercare plans. Thorough assessments and re-assessments are expected to result in reducing both recurrence and re-entry rates.

As identified in the Peer Quality Case Review of 2005, El Dorado County will continue to ensure that SDM tools are consistently used, which is also expected to contribute to a reduction in the rate of recurrence of maltreatment and re-entry into the foster care system.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

El Dorado County will train staff and community partners on DR Phase II being implemented as an aftercare plan.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

Collaboration with other agencies was identified in El Dorado County's PQCR in 2005 as a promising practice. Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) in Placerville and South Lake Tahoe have been recently implemented to discuss cases across disciplines. MDT coordination and administration have been financed by Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funds, as outlined in El Dorado County's Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT), Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP), and Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Three Year Plan 2005-2008.

The Placerville office is in the process of forming an executive level collaborative consisting of major community stakeholders. This forum will provide an opportunity to discuss and strategize solutions to fiscal and programmatic issues and discuss global concerns of agencies and the community regarding high risk children and families. Items for discussion could include the implementation and financing of programs such as Differential Response, more effective service delivery such as use of evidence based practices, identification of service gaps in the community, maximizing opportunities to blend funds, joint-participation in programs and service deliveries, and non-duplication of services.

The Lake Tahoe Collaborative continues to be an effective organization in South Lake Tahoe where information is shared regarding services and resources on the Eastern Slope of El Dorado County.

El Dorado County is in the process of implementing the Permanency Partners Partnership (P3) program in conjunction with El Dorado County's Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) organization. P3 is a program that helps youth form permanent relationships with caring adults. Through the use of a special mediation process, when reunification is not possible, youth ages 12-18 will have the opportunity to find a permanent home or re-establish connections with adults whom had at one time played a significant positive role in their lives, when reunification is not possible.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

The County recommends that the State recognize the increased workload of social workers. There is a need for increased staffing allocations in order to implement additional programs such as Intensive Family Preservation Program, which should include twice weekly in-home social worker visits to families identified as being at risk for re-entry. There is also a need for expanded services during the vulnerable transition period once the case has been dismissed and the children are returned home. The County also recommends that the State consider County need for funding sources to implement and provide programs such as DR and P3, evidence-based programs such as Dependency Drug Court, and intensive family-based drug rehabilitation programs such as Celebrating Families!

OUTCOME 2 – PROBATION DEPARTMENT

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Children are maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.					
County's Current Performance: Monthly snapshots of wards on probation and placed in group homes include: July of 2002 – 29; January of 2003 – 22; January of 2004 – 14; and December of 2005 – 9.					
Improvement Goal 1.0: Continue to refer minors to local resources in an attempt to keep minors in their homes with their families, keeping the number of minors placed in group homes under 15. Probation will utilize local resources in an attempt to keep a minor at home with his/her family, including out-patient counseling and related services, negating the need for placement in a group home. Local resources also include in-custody (juvenile hall) programs, such as the 60-day Substance Abuse Turnaround Education Program (STEP), the 120-day Family Reunification Program (FRP), and the 180-day Challenge Program.					
Strategy 1. 1: The Deputy Probation Officer (DPO) will evaluate each case and refer the minor and parent(s) to appropriate local resources.			Strategy Rationale: A referral is made to an appropriate local resource in an attempt to get a minor and parent(s) involved in education or counseling programs to address the minor's issues and, hopefully, prevent further behaviors which may lead to removal from the parental home.		
Milestone	1.1.1: DPO will review the case file, investigate the minor's needs, and discuss these needs with the minor and parent(s) at initial meeting to determine necessary services; the DPO will then make a referral to an appropriate local resource.	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	DPO
	1.1.2: The Supervising Deputy Probation Officer (SDPO) will review cases regularly to ensure appropriate local resources are in place or the minor has been referred.		Ongoing		SDPO
	1.1.3: The DPO will continue to supervise the minor during participation, and after completion, of a program.		Ongoing		DPO

Strategy 1. 2: If a minor is ordered by the Court to participate in an in-custody program, the minor will be supervised by a DPO while in the program and will be referred to appropriate local resources upon release from custody.		Strategy Rationale: After a minor has completed an in-custody program, continued counseling and support is often necessary, and immediate participation in an appropriate local resource is crucial to the minor’s success in transitioning home.			
Milestone	1.2.1: DPO will evaluate minor’s needs with the Coordinator of the appropriate in-custody program and either (1) a referral will be made prior to the minor’s release, or (2) an appointment will be made for the minor to attend an appointment as soon as possible following release.	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	DPO
	1.2.2: The Supervising Deputy Probation Officer (SDPO) will review cases regularly to ensure appropriate local resources are in place or the minor has been referred.		Ongoing		SDPO
Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals. None					
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Prior to making a referral, the DPO will need to have an understanding of what each local resource has to offer and what services can be provided. This understanding develops through on-the-job training and knowledge of the community.					
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Each local resource will provide their service to a minor and family, and written or verbal communication addressing a minor’s participation and/or completion of a program will be provided to a DPO. Communication between the local resource and the DPO is essential to assist the minor and parent(s) in completing a program.					
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None					

Glossary	
Children's Assessment Team	This team is comprised of representatives from Public Health, the County Office of Education, (including a McKinney-Vento Homeless Foster Youth liaison), Mental Health (adult and child), the assigned social worker, and a CPS supervisor and manager. The Children's Assessment Team meets weekly to review referrals on families with children that have been identified by SDM for being at-risk of abuse or neglect.
Children and Parents Resource Team	This South Lake Tahoe multidisciplinary team meets twice monthly and includes representatives from Children's Protective Services, Probation, CASA, Education, Women's Center, Tahoe Youth and Family Services, Public Health, Sierra Recovery Center and Mental Health. The purpose of the team is to identify families that are engaged with a least two of the participating agencies to discuss treatment need.
Concurrent Planning	The process of coupling aggressive efforts to reunify the family with careful planning for the possibility of adoption or other permanency options should circumstances prevent the child from returning home.
Differential Response	A graduated system for addressing referrals to the Child Abuse Hotline/Intake including an initial assessment designed to identify immediate steps necessary to assure child safety and family engagement in such services as may be required to support them in performance of their parenting responsibilities.
Fos-adopt Home	A fos-adopt home is a foster family home that has an approved adoption homestudy.
Lake Tahoe Collaborative	The Lake Tahoe Collaborative is a group comprised of many public and private agency providers in the South Lake Tahoe Basin, and has the expressed intent of sharing information regarding services and resources on the Eastern Slope of El Dorado County.
Maltreatment	An act of omission by a parent or another person who exercises care, custody, and ongoing control of a child which results in, or places the child at risk of, developmental, physical or psychological harm.

Glossary	
Multi-Disciplinary Teams	A group of professionals and paraprofessionals representing an array of disciplines (e.g., resource families, service providers, law enforcement and other community organizations) who interact and coordinate efforts for children and families, pooling their skills to offer comprehensive, coordinated services.
Multi-Level Review/Team/process	A process wherein a group of professionals come together to review CWS referrals and cases. This group may be the social worker, supervisor and manager, the Children's Assessment Team, the Children and Parents Resource Team, Linkages, Drug Court Team or Multi-Disciplinary Team.
Peer Quality Case Review	Each county welfare agency forms teams composed of its own social workers, staff from other counties and CDSS staff to review randomly selected cases in at least one of its identified improvement areas. Teams conduct structured interviews to evaluate cases.
Permanence	A primary outcome for child welfare services whereby all children and youth have stable and nurturing legal relationships with adult caregivers that create a shared sense of belonging and emotional security enduring over time.
Safety	A primary outcome for child welfare services whereby all children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
Structured Decision Making (SDM)	SDM is a standardized, research-based tool, used by social workers for making critical safety and risk assessments and decisions in regard to children and families.

¹ OneStop is a multi-agency employment center.

² California Child Welfare Services Outcome and Accountability Data Report (Child Welfare Supervised Caseload) El Dorado, October 2005

³ California's Target Rate on Federal Outcome Measures in California's Program Improvement Plan (PIP) for Child Welfare.

⁴ Core training is provided by the University of California at Davis Extension, Northern Academy, and is designed to deliver competency-based curricula to new caseworkers in public child welfare and must be completed within a year of hire